

**Becoming Like Jesus – Part 3**  
(Colossians 3:12 – Compassion and Kindness)

**INTRODUCTION:**

1. Today I want to continue our study of how we are to become like Jesus.
2. It is important that we do this because we are called to become disciples, or followers, of Jesus (Matt. 28:18-20 – “And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and **make disciples** [followers] of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> **teaching them to observe all that I commanded you**; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”).
3. To help us be more like Christ we have been focusing on the teaching of Colossians 3:1-17.
  - A. In the first lesson we saw how becoming like Jesus requires that we change our focus from earthly things to things above, or to heavenly, spiritual things (3:1-4).
  - B. In the second lesson we saw how we must change our life by *putting off* sinful actions and attitudes because we have *put on a new self* that is being renewed in Christ’s image (3:5-11).
4. In today’s lesson we are going to begin focusing on the spiritual “clothing,” if you will, *that our new self* is required to wear (**Col. 3:12-17**).
5. To do that we will:
  - A. Consider how our motivation to put on these clothes is that we are now God’s special people.
  - B. Then, because of who we are in Christ we will consider how we are to clothe ourselves with compassion and kindness.

**BODY:**

**I. Motivation: We are God’s special people (3:12a)**

- A. We are:
  1. God’s *elect*, or *His chosen ones*, as is said of Jesus in 1 Pet. 2:4 where he is called “**choice** [chosen] and precious in the sight of God.”
  2. God’s *holy ones*, those who have set apart for God’s holy purposes, just as is said of Jesus in Jn. 6:69 is called the “holy One of God.”
  3. God’s *beloved*, as is said Jesus God’s “beloved Son” (Col. 1:13).
  4. That God describes us as He does His own Son is nothing short of amazing, considering we have done nothing—nothing—to deserve it!
- B. Our new reality is to be the foundation upon which we build our Christ-like life.
  1. Peter make the same basic point (1 Pet. 2:9-10 – “But you are **a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light**; <sup>10</sup> for you once were not a people, but **now you are the people of God**; you had not received mercy, **but now you have received mercy**.”).
  2. What a great encouragement it would be if we reminded ourselves daily that “**God has chosen me like His Son, and made me holy like His Son is holy, because He loves me just like he loves His Son Jesus!**”
    - a. For these things to be true God had to sacrifice Jesus on the cross for us as sinners!
    - b. So, if God has loved us that much as sinners, how much more should we know and appreciate His love for us as His children?!
- C. As God’s chosen, holy, and beloved, He calls upon you and me to put on the clothing befitting this honor.
  1. That we are to *put on*, or *wear*, these characteristics means that God wants them to be seen, to cover our lives, just as people see our physical clothing that covers our bodies.

2. In other words, without these characteristics, we will find ourselves spiritually naked and shameful!

## II. Clothing: A heart of compassion:

### A. What is compassion?

1. Defined: (οἰκτιρμός, oiktirmos) pity, mercy, heartfelt compassion or kindness [in relieving sorrow and want] (**Thayer; Mounce; BDAG**)
2. Compassion involves:
  - a. A sympathetic consciousness of another's distress with an *active desire* to *alleviate* that distress.
  - b. So, God calls us to look beyond ourselves that we might see and feel for what is happening in other people's lives.

### B. How do we develop true compassion?

1. We learn it from God.
  - a. For, compassion is a predominate characteristic of God as He declared in the wilderness when he appeared to a very distressed Moses (Ex. 34:5-7 – “The LORD descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of the LORD. <sup>6</sup> Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, **compassionate** and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in **lovingkindness** and truth; <sup>7</sup> who keeps **lovingkindness** for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.”).
  - b. When God speaks, His every word is given with divine purpose, and therefore, we should note how His first word in describing Himself was that He is *compassionate*.
    - i. Would *compassionate* be the first word you would use to describe God?
    - ii. If you are like me, then maybe not, which tells me I need to focus and meditate more on His compassion!
    - iii. For, God's compassion is great and never fails.
      - 1) Jas. 5:11 – “We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is **full of compassion** and is **merciful**.”
      - 2) Lamentations 3:22-23 – “The LORD's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for **His compassions never fail**. <sup>23</sup> They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.”
2. We see it in Jesus, our Savior, and High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-16 – “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. <sup>15</sup> For **we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses**, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup> Therefore let us **draw near with confidence** to the throne of grace, so that we may **receive mercy and find grace to help** in time of need.”).
  - a. That God is compassionate toward us his sinful/rebellious creatures is enough to amaze.
  - b. Yet, that He is compassionate enough to send His son to live as a human, to face temptation, suffering, and death so that we may have a Savior and High Priest that sympathizes with us and our weaknesses is almost beyond comprehension.

### C. We must emulate God's compassion in our lives.

1. For, God intends to show His compassion through us (2 Cor. 1:3-4 – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of **mercies** [compassions] and God of all comfort, <sup>4</sup> who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”).
2. Just as God has shown compassion in our lives, He intends that we show compassion toward

others...even when it is not easy to do so.

- a. It must be shown toward sinning brethren (Gal. 6:1-2 – “Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one **in a spirit of gentleness**; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. <sup>2</sup> **Bear one another’s burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.**”).
    - i. When we might be tempted to become frustrated or angry and not show compassion to sinning brethren because *they should know better*, we must remember that to do so is not the law of Christ.
    - ii. For, God has shown compassion to us when we have sinned, even when we should, and do, know better.
  - b. We are to show compassion to the weak when it is hard because they are *weak*! (Rom. 15:1-3 – “Now we who are strong ought to **bear the weaknesses** of those without strength and **not just please ourselves**. <sup>2</sup> Each of us is to **please his neighbor for his good, to his edification**. <sup>3</sup> For **even Christ did not please Himself**; but as it is written, “**the reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.**”).
    - i. It is easy to dismiss the weak because *they make bad choices* or because *they just do not put forth enough effort to grow!*
    - ii. Yet, God wants us to remember His compassion shown to us in our weaknesses. For, do you honestly think any of us are really *strong* in God’s eyes? No!
3. So, compassion is vital to show the world that we have been touched by God through Jesus.

### III. Clothing: A heart of kindness:

#### A. What is kindness?

1. Defined: (χρηστότης chrēstotēs) generosity, moral good/goodness, kindness [sympathetic concern for the well-being of others] that causes us to act rightly toward others (**Strong, Mounce, BDAG, Thayer, Robertson**).
  - a. Thus, kindness is something that is active, practical, and visible.
  - b. It is the willingness, as one said, to actively “**find the need and fill it, to find the hurt and heal it,**” just as God has done in our lives!
2. It is a very important characteristic of the Christian life.
  - a. Kindness is one of the fruits of the Spirit that characterize the life of those who have “crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (Gal. 5:22-23)
  - b. It is a part of the love that must characterize the Christian (1 Cor. 13:4 – “Love is patient, **love is kind...**”)
  - c. It is a virtue that must be added to our faith to ensure entrance into the “eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you” (2 Pet. 1:5-11).
  - d. Kindness is not an option, but a necessity for God’s people.

#### B. How do we develop godly kindness?

1. Like compassion, kindness is learned from God.
  - a. The psalmist, in a two-verse psalm, praised God for his kindness to all peoples (Psa. 117:1-2 – “Praise the LORD, all nations; Laud Him, all peoples! <sup>2</sup> For His lovingkindness is great toward us, and the truth of the LORD is everlasting. Praise the LORD!”).
  - b. As Christians we should be very aware of God’s kindness because we experience it in our salvation in Jesus (Titus 3:3-7 – “For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. <sup>4</sup> But when the **kindness of God our Savior** and His love for mankind **appeared**, <sup>5</sup> **He saved us**, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but **according to His mercy**, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom He poured out upon us **richly through Jesus Christ our Savior**, <sup>7</sup> so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the

- hope of eternal life.”).
- i. God has shown us kindness despite our foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved, envious, and hateful ways.
  - ii. So, God made the *conscious choice* to show great kindness to us when we were completely, and continue to be, unworthy of it.
2. God’s kindness is to produce kindness in us.
    - a. God’s kindness is to be seen in how we live in and treat the world (Titus 3:1-3, 8 – “Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be **obedient**, to be **ready for every good deed**,<sup>2</sup> to **malign no one**, to be **peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men**.”<sup>3</sup> For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another...<sup>8</sup> This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have **believed** God **will be careful to engage in good deeds**. These things are good and profitable for men.”).
    - b. God’s kindness is to be seen in our treatment of brethren (Eph. 4:30-32 – “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”<sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.<sup>32</sup> Be **kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other**, just as God in Christ also **has forgiven you**.”).
  - C. Though kindness may be difficult to maintain, especially to the unkind, remember the light your kindness will shine in this dark world we live in.
    1. For, we do live in a very dark world (2 Tim. 3:2-4 – “For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,<sup>3</sup> unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,<sup>4</sup> treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God”).
    2. So, think of how brightly your kindness will shine the light of Christ in that darkness.
    3. So, like compassion, it is vital for God’s people to show kindness to the world that they might get a glimpse of Christ and the wonders of God’s salvation!

#### CONCLUSION:

1. I want to encourage you as beneficiaries of God compassion and kindness to live compassionate and kind lives for the Lord toward those who are hurting, suffering, and in distress, even when it is caused by their own sin!
  - A. For, that is what God has done for us.
  - B. And that is how we will impact the lives of people around us and draw them toward Jesus.
2. And, if you are outside of Christ, I would ask you to consider the compassion and kindness of God offered you so abundantly in Jesus who God sent to earth to die for your sins that you might be saved from sin and receive eternal life.
3. What will your response to God’s compassion and kindness? Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord, obeying Him in R, C, and B into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins?